

2000-2024 Plot popularity

In 2009, I got my plot at Northfield allotments, I had put my name down around one and a half years earlier. It was the start of an exciting time for me at the allotment, at that time Pathways who were called Ealing and Brentford Consolidated charity paid a manager to rent plots, on something like a one day a week basis. The fence around the allotment was just a four ft. high cleft chestnut paling and was easy to climb over, there were around six homeless people living rough in sheds at the top end of the allotments. To sum up the allotments at that time, you knew the plot holders around you but often didn't know other plot holders and avoided places other than your plot.

In 2013 Pathways added new gates and a fence around the allotments, with this improvement the rough sleepers disappeared in time. In 2014 Pathways asked the allotments holders if they would be prepared to be "Self managed" by creating their own committee and manage the site. A committee of plot holders was formed and EDAS (Ealing Dean Allotment society) was created. We named it EDAS as a 'tip of the hat' to our former name and recognition of all the past plot holders. Since then the site has been self-managed by EDAS and the condition of plots and the site has improved.

In 2016 Pathways decided that they wanted to build housing in the northern section of the allotments, there was great dismay from the plot holders, and we started a campaign to fight the housing development, Christina Fox was the leading person behind the fight to save the allotments. As a consequence of this, the committee created a Summer and Halloween open days for the public to raise money to fight the development and raise awareness.

In 2019 Pathways formally ended the proposal for the development of the site.

The open days have become a local event in Ealing and the Halloween is so popular that we have had to limit the tickets to 3000 people, while the Summer open day usually gets around 800 people in the four hours we are open.

These days, allotments are seen as a green space where you can grow organic vegetables. Raised bed and wood chip paths have become more common place over the traditional ploughed soil, although many people still have this style.

The waiting list in 2024 has around 350 people on it, and plots are highly valued. A greater community spirit was created during the time of the proposed development, and plot holders have a closer bond than before that time.

An allotment plot is a beautiful place to rent, you can create a space that suits your needs and share in the community spirit with others, enjoy the wildlife all around you and if you are lucky, dig up treasure from past plot holders who lived their life and worked the same soil over 100 years before you were born. How awesome is that!

Image below left: 2018 Open day banner, right Summer open day courtesy EDAS website. Image bottom: My sheds looking into the allotments.



